And Sitteth on the Right Hand of God

Ron Baker*
the key in the ignition and sat quietly while the motor idled. She couldn’t go home just yet. Mom would have to manage the pie by herself. She swung the car around and started out to Wesson Park on the lake.

A cold wind met Marcie as she stepped out of the car on the bluff. Waves churned against the rocky shore below. No, the lake wasn’t frozen yet. About another month. She shivered and forced her head up, her face into the wind.

California. Send a man there who can’t be cured. Marcie felt the ball of fear spread out and seep through her, becoming a load of defeat. Yes, send a man there who can’t be cured, so the law will protect him. Even if he is your friend. Even if you don’t want him to be this way.

Yes, about another month and the lake would be frozen.

M. J. Miles, Sci. Sr.

... And Sitteth

on the Right Hand of God...

Fade in.

ROLLING across the floor is smoke or fog or some other substance which will give the effect of the tops of clouds. The background is light blue and appears to extend forever. A man is walking slowly, his feet swirling the tops of the clouds. He is clad in a long white garment similar to a robe. His hair is long and needs combing and his beard is the same. As he moves along he is approached from the rear and to one side by a man wearing a three-button ivy-league business suit. The man is about forty years old, with brown hair and eyes. He has the definite beginnings of a paunch in front and a middle-age spread in back.

Business suit. “Hey, just a minute.” He hurries toward the man in the robe. The man in the robe waits. “What is this place?”

Robe. “You must be new here.”
Business suit. "Yeah, I sure am. Where am I, anyway?"
Robe. "You are wearing strange clothes. Where are these clothes worn?"

Business suit. "Why, these clothes are worn all over the world, more or less. But this suit here is the newest thing and I suppose you would only find it in the good old U.S.A."
Robe. "U.S.A.?"
Business suit. "You know, the United States."
Robe. "What is the United States?"
Business suit. "Holy Smoke. How long have you been here?"
Robe. "I have been here for a long time and then again for a short time. We do not keep track of time here. But I would say I died many lifetimes before yours."

Business Suit. "Then you have been here long enough to know your way around. How about giving me some directions?"
Robe. "If I can."
Business suit. "Good. Where do I go first?"
Robe. "Where do you wish to go?"
Business suit. "Well, what is the first thing you do when you get here? Where's them pearly gates." He forces a laugh.
Robe. "I know of no pearly gates, and there is really no first place to go here."

Business suit. "Well shouldn't I report somewhere or something? Of course I'm not exactly a saint, but I'm up here, so I must've made the grade."
Robe. "I'm afraid I do not understand you."
Business suit. "Isn't this Heaven?"
Robe. "Oh, yes. I see. Yes, I guess you could say the Kingdom of Heaven is here."

Business suit. "Well, now we're getting someplace. Can you tell me how to get there?"
Robe. "Do not rush things. You will get there someday. I cannot tell you the way though, for I was there only once and I cannot remember the way. It was a long time ago when I was there."

Business suit. "Think hard, man. Surely you could not forget a thing like that."
Robe. “Look about you. How does one remember directions in a place such as this?”

Business suit. “I see what you mean. Do I have to walk around until I run onto it?”

Robe. “Yes.”

Business suit. “Say. If you found it once, why aren’t you still there, or in the other place.”

Robe. “I am in the only other place there is. The reason I am not still there is because I could not get in.”

Business suit. “You couldn’t get in, huh. Say are you a Christian?”

Robe. “I do not know. What is a Christian?”

Business suit. (chuckles) “I see. Well that is too bad. I do belong to the Church though. Like I said before I’m no saint but I guess I was as good as the next guy.” He chuckles. “I expect you know how it is. God helps them that help themselves. Nothing real serious, of course.” He laughs.

Robe. “Yes, I know the ways of people.”

Business suit. “Listen. When you’re up here can you see what’s going on down there?”

Robe. “No. There is no more contact.”

Business suit. “I suppose you run across people up here. I mean people that you knew down there.”

Robe. “It is possible, but not very probable. You see this place extends forever in all directions. There is much room for few people.”

Business suit. “Have you ever run across anyone you knew before?”

Robe. “This may sound strange to you but I have never met another except you since I was turned away from the Kingdom.”

Business suit. “No, I hadn’t noticed, but I think I’d better go search for the Kingdom.”

Robe. “What is your hurry? You are only hurrying to a place that you do not know. You may be hurrying away from it.”

Business suit. “Yeah. I guess you’re right. Still it seems like I should hurry and try hard to find it. Could you tell me how long it will take?”
Robe. "Time is of no consequence. Besides I do not think there is any reason for you to hurry or even to find it."

Business suit. "Why, that's absurd. Of course, I should find it. I am a good Christian."

Robe. "But I heard you mention a church. Those who are allowed to enter do not belong to a church."

Business suit. "They don't. Well what do they do?"

Robe. "I could not find out, but I know there are only a handful there and they come from a land which is always full of ice and snow."

Business suit. "Do you mean only those few have the true religion?"

Robe. "It seems to be that way."

Business suit. "Well, what about the rest of us?"

Robe. "It seems we are to wander about forever as we are doing now."

Business suit. "That's terrible. Did you have a religion before?"

Robe. "I had a belief. I was very certain of it then. I have often wondered if others hold so strongly to beliefs. I have wondered if others believed as I."

Business suit. "Since you didn't belong to a church I doubt if many others believed like you. But I guess it doesn't really matter now, does it?"

Robe. "It seems that way."

They begin to drift slowly apart.

Business suit. "What was your name before?"

Robe. "Down there I was called Jesus of Nazareth."

Fade out.

Ron Baker, Sci. Sr.